

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1119
ANSWERED ON:05.03.2008
NEW INITIATIVES TO ASSIST INDIAN WORKERS ABROAD
Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is considering to launch new initiatives to assist Indian workers abroad;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to implement the same?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c): The following initiatives have been taken by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to assist the Indian workers abroad :

i. A Nation-wide skill upgradation training programme for potential migrant workers. This will help create a strong cadre of highly skill workers to fill the large labour supply gaps. Ministry is launching this Scheme in diverse sectors such as construction, engineering, manufacturing, nursing, IT and household services etc. The Scheme is being implemented in partnership with the State Governments, the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), as well as Apex Industry Associations, Non Governmental Organizations etc. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has already been signed between Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and MSME.

ii. Setting up of Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) to provide all relevant information and assistance to potential migrant workers. Prime Minister has launched the Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) during Pravasi Bharatiya Divas - 2008 as a Helpline for rendering assistance to Indian workers abroad and those who are desirous of going abroad for employment. The helpline has a toll free number 1800 11 3090 accessible from anywhere in India. At present, the Helpline is functioning in seven languages viz Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam, Punjabi, Kannada and Telugu from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm, seven days a week.

iii. Setting up of a Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment (CPOE) to serve as a strategic think-tank. Cabinet has approved the setting up of the Council. The Ministry is in the process of registering the Council as a not-for-profit Society. The completion of all procedural formalities may take some time.

iv. The Government is considering a proposal to establish a welfare fund for the benefit of emigrants. The Fund envisages provision of welfare services to the emigrants at all stages – financial support to meet emigration expenses at the pre-emigration stage, need based on-site welfare during their stay abroad and need based rehabilitation services after their return to India. The Welfare Fund is likely to be established during the financial year 2008-09.